UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Sunday, August 31, 2025

Be careful what you wish for

As we approach the fall quarter, with the dilemma for many instructors of what to do about AI still an issue, we suggest being cautious about what remedies you ask for:

===

Request:

There is a joke in which someone says to a genie, Genie make me a malted, and the genie replies, Poof, you're a malted. Why is this funny?

===

Gemini says:

This joke plays on a classic pun, specifically the double meaning of the phrase "make me."

When the person says, "Genie, make me a malted," they intend for the genie to create a malted milkshake for them.

However, the genie deliberately misunderstands the request and takes it literally. They interpret "make me" to mean "transform me into." So, instead of creating a malted for the person to drink, the genie transforms the person into a malted.

The humor comes from this unexpected twist, as the genie's literal interpretation of the request leads to a ridiculous and silly outcome. It's a classic example of a wordplay joke.

===

Grok says:

The humor in the joke comes from a play on words, specifically a pun based on the double meaning of "malted." The person asking the genie likely intends "malted" to mean a malted milkshake, a popular drink made with malted milk powder. However, the genie interprets "malted" in a different sense, as if it refers to malted barley, a key ingredient in beer or whiskey production, or simply twists the request into a literal transformation. By saying, "Poof, you're a malted," the genie humorously misinterprets the wish and turns the person into "a malted" (implying they've become the drink or ingredient) instead of granting the intended beverage.

This is funny because it subverts the asker's expectations through the genie's literal or mischievous interpretation, a common comedic device in genie jokes where wishes go wrong due to ambiguous wording. The surprise and absurdity of being transformed into something unexpected—rather than receiving a simple drink—creates the laugh.

===

Copilot says:

This joke is a classic example of misunderstanding through literal interpretation, which is a common comedic device. Here's why it works:

🤦 Setup vs. Punchline

• Setup: "Genie, make me a malted."

• The speaker is using colloquial shorthand to request a malted milkshake, a sweet drink made with ice cream and malted milk powder.

• In everyday speech, "make me a malted" means "prepare one for me."

• Punchline: "Poof, you're a malted."

• The genie interprets the request literally: instead of making a drink for the person, he magically transforms the person into a malted.

• The humor comes from the genie's overly literal and magical response to a casual phrase.

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- Coalition of UC unions condemns Trump's attacks on the UC and the California economy
- Stand up for values in the face of Trump's $300 million cut to UCLA scholars
- Faculty leaders comment on UCB Chancellor Lyon's appearance before House Committee on Education and the Workforce
- CUCFA Opposes AB 715
- Pause Trellix and Form a Working Group to Explore Cybersecurity Solutions

Remaking the University

- The coalition of UC unions condemns Trump's attacks on the University of California and the Californian economy - 8/26/2025
- Liner Note 37. Chicago's Gift to Trump - 8/24/2025
- Liner Note 36. UCLA in the Extortion Machine - 8/10/2025

Higher Ed. News & Commentary

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- Inside Higher Education
- Remaking the University
- Changing Universities
- California Professor

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😂 Why It's Funny

• Wordplay: It hinges on the ambiguity of the word "make." In English, "make me a malted" can mean "create one for me" or "turn me into one."

• Absurdity: The idea of a person being turned into a milkshake is ridiculous and unexpected.

• Subversion of Expectations: You expect a drink to appear. Instead, the person becomes the drink.

This kind of joke is in the same family as:

"Can you make me a sandwich?"

"Poof! You're a sandwich."

It's short, silly, and plays with language in a way that kids and adults alike can enjoy. Want to try crafting a few genie jokes of your own? I bet you'd come up with some clever ones.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Straws in the Wind - Part 87

From the San Francisco Chronicle: *New federal rules single out just one California university — Stanford — for a massive tax bill that will grow to more than $1 billion over the rest of the decade, rather than the $175 million the school would have otherwise paid. The higher tax rates are part of the national spending bill President Donald Trump signed into law in July and target private university endowments — the cushions of cash that colleges rely on to spin off funding for everything from student scholarships to infrastructure projects. Stanford, it turns out, is one of just 19 private universities and the only one in California with a large enough endowment relative to its enrollment to trigger the higher tax hit next year, according to an analysis by the conservative American Enterprise Institute. By 2030, the number could rise to 25.*

College endowments were exempt from federal tax before 2017. But during the first Trump administration, private colleges with 500 or more students began paying a 1.4% endowment tax. The new tax structure that kicks in next year not only includes higher rates, but also taxes more things, such as royalty income from research that ever benefited from a federal grant. Under the new law, colleges enrolling fewer than 3,000 tuition-paying students are exempt. That means 26 private universities nationwide will no longer pay any federal tax on their endowment, including CalTech, Pomona and Claremont-McKenna in California...

Five-year endowment tax liability

Projection for U.S. colleges from 2026 to 2030 based on trends in enrollment, endowment value and investment income

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University	Five-year total
Harvard University	$2.1B
Yale University	$1.6B
Princeton University	$1.3B
Stanford University	$1.2B
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	$1B
University of Notre Dame	$690M
University of Pennsylvania	$350M
Northwestern University	$350M
Washington University in St Louis	$320M
Duke University	$270M
Vanderbilt University	$260M
Johns Hopkins University	$260M
Dartmouth College	$190M
Brown University	$150M
Emory University	$150M

Five-year endowment tax liability

Projection for U.S. colleges from 2026 to 2030 based on trends in enrollment, endowment value and investment income

‹ Page 2 of 2

University	Five-year total
Rice University	$120M
University of Chicago	$100M
Columbia University in the City of New York	$80M
University of Richmond	$70M
Cornell University	$30M
Carnegie Mellon University	$10M
Colgate University	$4.7M
University of Tulsa	$1.5M
College of the Holy Cross	$1.5M
Wesleyan University	$1M

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Full story at https://www.sfchronicle.com/california/article/stanford-tax-university-endowment-trump-20824158.php.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: CalTech, Claremont McKenna, politics, Pomona College, Stanford

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 52

From the Harvard Crimson: *President Donald J. Trump demanded that Harvard pay "nothing less than $500 million" in order to restore its federal funding, calling the University "very bad" during a Cabinet meeting [last] Tuesday. "We want nothing less than $500 million from Harvard. Don't negotiate, Linda," Trump said, addressing Education Secretary Linda E. McMahon. "They've been very bad. Don't negotiate."*

McMahon acknowledged the remark but did not respond further. Though the figure has been widely circulated in media reports, Trump's comments marked the first time the White House has publicly attached a specific $500 million sum to Harvard's case. The clock is ticking closer to a ruling in Harvard's challenge of the Trump administration's freeze of more than $2 billion in research grants. The University asked U.S. District Judge Allison D. Burroughs to rule in the lawsuit before Sept. 3 — the date by which Harvard must start closing out federally funded projects if funding remains suspended. Harvard's lawyers have said that a decision past that date could make it easier for the Trump administration to avoid restoring the frozen grants...

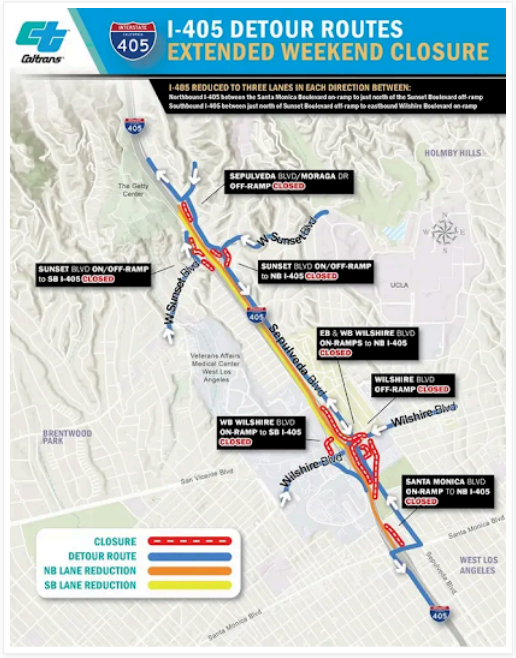
Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/8/27/trump-500-million-mcmahon/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, politics

Saturday, August 30, 2025

It will keep on happening


I-405 DETOUR ROUTES
EXTENDED WEEKEND CLOSURE
I-405 REDUCED TO THREE LANES IN EACH DIRECTION BETWEEN:
SEPULVEDA BLVD/MORAGA DR OFF-RAMP CLOSED
SUNSET BLVD ON/OFF-RAMP to SB I-405 CLOSED
SUNSET BLVD ON/OFF-RAMP to NB I-405 CLOSED
EB & WB WILSHIRE BLVD ON-RAMPS to NB I-405 CLOSED
WILSHIRE BLVD OFF-RAMP CLOSED
WB WILSHIRE BLVD ON-RAMP to SB I-405 CLOSED
SANTA MONICA BLVD ON-RAMP TO NB I-405 CLOSED
HOLMBY HILLS
BRENTWOOD PARK
WEST LOS ANGELES
CLOSURE
DETOUR ROUTE
NB LANE REDUCTION
SB LANE REDUCTION

Remember the weekend traffic snafu on the 405 in the Sepulveda Pass near UCLA two weeks ago? It will keep on happening. From Patch:

..."The estimated number of Extended Weekend Lane Reductions where at least three lanes remain open in each direction is planned to be about 25," a Caltrans spokesperson told Patch. Those weekend-long closures will happen at a pace of about every other week — or twice a month. In other words, the closures are expected to occur well into 2026.

The exact schedule has not been finalized...

Full story at https://patch.com/california/santamonica/s/jkuy0/405-freeway-closures-to-snarl-traffic-into-2026-how-to-avoid-the-worst-of-it.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:03 AM No comments:

Labels: traffic, UCLA

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Another Closed-Door Regents Meeting to Discuss You-Know-What

On August 26th, the Regents - or at least the chosen ten - held a closed-door meeting to discuss ongoing litigation with the feds.

The ten are listed as:

Anguiano, Cohen, Hernandez, Leib, Matosantos, Milliken, Reilly, Robinson, Sarris, and Sures.

That's all we know.

Source: https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/aug25/advisory_august-26-2025.pdf.

Explanation given: *Because the membership of the Advisory Group on Research and Programs Funding Legal Issues ("Advisory Group") includes five members of the Regents' Governance Committee, there exists the potential for having present a quorum of a Regents' Committee when the advisory committee meets. This notice of meeting is served in order to comply fully with pertinent open meeting laws*.

Previous such meetings were held on August 11 and August 19.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:25 AM No comments:

Straws in the Wind - Part 86

From the Columbus Dispatch: *...Former university President E. Gordon Gee will take on a one-year consulting role at Ohio State, which will include working with the new Salmon P. Chase Center by recruiting faculty and increasing the center's presence on campus and nationally, according to a copy of Gee's university contract obtained by The Dispatch. ...Gee will generally act as a resource for university leaders in advancing "their strategic priorities." He will report directly to Executive Vice President and Provost Ravi V. Bellamkonda and engage with leaders of the John Glenn College of Public Affairs, Moritz College of Law and Chase Center.*

Through these three collaborations, Gee's contract says he will provide support, advice and open dialogue with programs and institutions nationwide that may be interested in working with the university. The contract goes on to mention Gee will further advance the Chase Center by working with its director, Lee Strang.

...The Chase Center, an "intellectual diversity" center created through the passage of Ohio Senate Bill 117, was established to promote civil discourse and prevent alleged leftist ideology from "replacing the lessons of history" on college campuses, according to a news release from Sen. Jerry Cirino, a Republican from Kirtland, one of the bill's sponsors...*

===

*https://www.ohiosenate.gov/members/jerry-c-cirino/news/special-commentary-by-senator-cirino-on-landmark-higher-education-reform.

===

Full story at https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/local/2025/08/19/former-ohio-state-osu-president-e-gordon-gee-returns-campus-consulting/85723386007/.

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From the Brown Daily Herald: *About 15 incoming international students are "unable to reach" Brown's campus for the start of the fall semester, President Christina Paxson P'19 P'MD'20 wrote... Most of these affected students were graduate students, Paxson wrote, adding that "many others" have decided to defer their studies. About a third of graduate students and 14 percent of undergraduate students at Brown come from outside of the United States. The challenges come amid a variety of new obstacles that the Trump administration has put in place for international students seeking to study in the U.S. These students were impacted by delays in visa appointments and approvals, according to Amanda McGregor, a spokesperson for the University...*

Full story at https://www.browndailyherald.com/article/2025/08/about-15-incoming-international-students-unable-to-reach-campus-this-fall-paxson-says.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Brown University, diversity, Ohio State U, politics

Friday, August 29, 2025

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 51

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 41
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► 2018 (595)
► 2017 (666)
► 2016 (715)
► 2015 (765)
► 2014 (704)
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Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard's Arts and Humanities division instructed department heads to collectively reduce their budgets for non-personnel spending by roughly $1.95 million as divisions across the Faculty of Arts and Sciences implement cost-cutting plans. Faculty in the Science and Social Science divisions of Harvard's liberal arts school said they have not yet heard from their divisional leaders about targeting a specific expenditure cut, but several departments in both divisions have shrunk their budgets for the coming year. The move comes months after FAS professors were told to develop contingency plans for departmental budget shortfalls, the latest response to the funding pressures brought by the Trump administration's attacks on Harvard's funding.*

FAS spokesperson James M. Chisholm confirmed in a statement that some of the contingency plans developed earlier this year have now been implemented. Harvard's budget has come under relentless pressure since Donald Trump stormed back to the presidency. His administration has frozen more than $2.7 billion in federal funding to Harvard. And in July, Congress passed an endowment tax hike that raised the tax on the University's endowment income from 1.4 percent to 8 percent. Harvard officials estimate that the combined impact of federal actions could cost the University $1 billion annually...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/8/24/bgltq-fgli-tutors-removed/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, politics

Straws in the Wind - Part 85

From Inside Higher Ed: *The Department of Education released guidance... discouraging colleges from using Federal Work-Study funds to pay students to work on voter registration efforts and other activities it deems political. The department announced the change to work study provisions in a Dear Colleague letter signed by acting assistant ED secretary Christopher McCaghren. "Jobs involving partisan or nonpartisan voter registration, voter assistance at a polling place or through a voter hotline, or serving as a poll worker—whether this takes place on or off campus—involve political activity because these activities support the process of voting which is a quintessential political activity whereby voters formally support partisan or nonpartisan political candidates by casting ballots," McCaghren wrote...*

Education Secretary Linda McMahon echoed that sentiment in a... social media post, writing that the department is "done funding political activism on college campuses!" She added, "Under the Trump Administration, taxpayer dollars will be used to prepare students for the workforce." McCaghren's letter also warned colleges about "aiding and abetting voter fraud." ...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2025/08/19/ed-clamps-down-student-voting-work.

From the Daily Emerald: *Deans and department heads at the University of Oregon are under mounting pressure to identify budget cuts amidst a university wide budget deficit. The cuts have led to multiple rounds of layoffs in recent months. In June, UO laid off 42 positions within the College of Arts and Sciences, including 11 career faculty. Five of those 11 were language faculty within the Schnitzer School according to a newsletter published by United Academics, the university's faculty union.*

Despite a recent donation of $25 million by the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation to support the School of Global Studies and Languages, many of the language programs will shrink amid these cuts. Once the next round of layoffs go into effect in September the school will reportedly no longer offer regular courses in Portuguese, Swedish or Swahili, according to the newsletter. The newsletter also alleges that CAS Dean Chris Poulsen has indicated that the school could eliminate the German and Russian language programs entirely. The cuts could reportedly affect tenured and non-tenured faculty alike. Under the UA Collective Bargaining Agreement the school would have to provide faculty with a one-year notice of termination meaning that the cuts would not fully impact the program until September 2026...

Full story at https://dailyemerald.com/168880/features/uo-to-reportedly-cut-multiple-language-program-amid-university-wide-budget-deficit/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, u of Oregon

(Potential) Winter Strike News

From the Bruin: *United Auto Workers Local 4811 demanded protections for immigrant workers, pay equity and **pushback against federal funding cuts** during negotiations with the UC beginning July 8. About 33,000 of the over 57,000 employees under UAW Local 4811, including academic student employees and graduate student researchers, are being represented in the ongoing negotiations. UAW Local 4811 is also representing nearly 5,000 student services and*

advising professionals in the determination of another bargaining unit contract – the first contract for the new group, which was recognized by the University in April.

There are five bargaining units under UAW Local 4811 – academic student employees, graduate student researchers, student services and advising professionals, postdoctoral scholars and academic researchers – three of which are being represented in the current negotiations. Once a new contract is determined, ASEs and GSRs will merge to simplify bargaining and implementation, according to a press release from the UC Office of the President. ***UAW Local 4811's existing contract with the University will expire Jan. 1, with negotiations expected to run through the end of 2025****...*

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2025/08/23/uaw-local-4811-pushes-for-immigrant-protections-pay-equity-in-uc-negotiations.

A demand for "pushback against federal funding cuts" is complicated and ambiguous. If there is no deal between UC and the feds, many research assistants - supported by grants - will be out of work. As we have noted in addition, while the courts may well unfreeze existing grants, their ability to open the door to grant renewals and to new grants is more limited. Ultimately, it is the (past) expectation of ongoing funding that is critical. In complicated ways, funding for positions that are not directly supported by federal grants still depends on those grants, e.g., overhead on grants helps pay for general services.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM 2 comments:

Labels: politics, strikes, UC

Thursday, August 28, 2025

A Whale of an Email from Jonah...

And the text reads:

Dear ~~~~~~,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Jonah, and I have been part of the Wikipedia editing community for the past seven years. I understand the importance of ensuring that respected academic careers are accurately represented.

Your work in research, teaching, and academic leadership has likely influenced many. A carefully written Wikipedia entry can offer helpful information to those looking to understand your career and contributions.

I assist with building and improving Wikipedia profiles in line with community guidelines, with a focus on accuracy and clarity.

If you are open to a brief discussion, I would be happy to share more.

Kind regards,
Jonah Eric
Wikipedia Contributor

If you would prefer not to receive future messages, just let me know.

===
Best advice: I would suggest not even letting Jonah know.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:17 AM No comments:

Labels: email fraud

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 50

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard College will no longer designate residential proctors and tutors to serve as dedicated support for LGBTQ and first-generation or low-income students, instead folding their responsibilities into a new "Culture and Community" specialty role. The change, which was announced [by] email to residential life staff from Associate Dean of Students Lauren E. Brandt, is the latest in a series of moves by the College to scale back its programs dedicated to students of specific identities. The newly-designated Culture and Community proctors and tutors will work to "foster cultivation of bonds and bridges to enable all members of our community to grow with and learn from each other," according to a document Brandt disseminated...*

"The goal is to support event planning, amplify outreach, and increase student-driven programming," it states...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/8/24/bgltq-fgli-tutors-removed/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, Harvard, politics

Straws in the Wind - Part 84

From Inside Higher Ed: *The State Department has revoked 6,000 student visas so far this year, Fox News reported along with The Washington Post. Of that group, 4,000 were revoked due to crimes, including assault, driving under the influence and burglary. However, a department spokesperson told the Post that the students whose visas had been revoked "either faced arrest or charges," but the spokesperson didn't specify whether they were convicted.*

The spokesperson also said that between 200 and 300 visas were revoked due to "support for terrorism." President Donald Trump has previously labeled pro-Palestinian student protesters as terrorist sympathizers and has targeted international students over their pro-Palestinian activism. The Post article does not address whether these students will have to stop their studies and leave the U.S. A visa—the stamp that permits an individual to enter the U.S.—is different from one's nonimmigrant status, which refers to whether they are lawfully in the country...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2025/08/20/6000-student-visas-revoked.

From the NY Times: *The Trump administration is backing away from a program that steers millions of dollars to universities that serve large numbers of Hispanic students. Federal officials said... that they would not contest a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the Hispanic-serving institution program, which supports colleges where at least 25 percent of the undergraduates are Hispanic. The program was challenged in federal court in Tennessee in June by Students for Fair Admissions, the group that successfully pushed the Supreme Court to ban race-conscious college admissions, and by the state of Tennessee. They argued that the 25-percent threshold of Hispanic students was an illegal quota.Tennessee also argued that several of its public colleges and universities were being unfairly deprived of millions of dollars in funding because they did not meet the 25-percent threshold...*

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/22/us/education-department-hispanic-serving-universities.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, politics

UC Plays the Nuclear Card

The videos that UC has been running as part of its PR campaign in response to the conflict with the feds have emphasized things like research on cancer. The idea is to relate to public concerns about such matters. However, it now has a video that seems more aimed at the Trump folks which takes note of the military aspect of what used to be called the nuclear labs: Los Alamos, Lawrence Livermore, and Lawrence Berkeley. You can see it below:

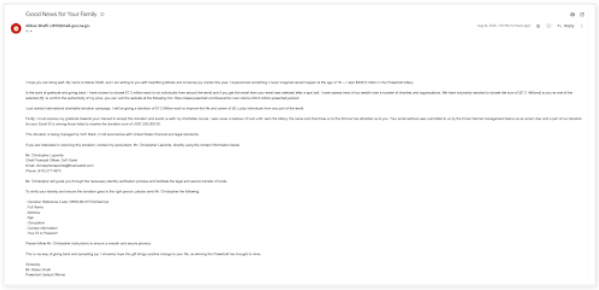
Or direct to https://x.com/uofcalifornia/status/1955023419050955214
or https://ia902901.us.archive.org/7/items/newsom-7-2-2025-arrests-of-immigrants/UC%20DOE%20labs%208-11-2025.mp4.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

Lucky Me


Good News for Your Family

You probably can't read the email above so I have reproduced the text below. (Clicking on the image will clarify it.) But the message is ostensibly from a Mr. Abbas Shafii whose email address suggests he lives in Japan. He wants to share his lottery winnings with lucky me. All I have to do is send some personal information...

Now, if you Google "Abbas Shafii," you will find that there is such a person and that he did win the Powerball lottery. But he lives in Oregon, not Japan. And although he talked about sharing some of the winnings with selected nonprofits, he did not talk about giving it to random individuals. There is also a Christopher Lapointe at SoFi Bank (see below), but the email address and phone number given for him below do not match.

So, I think I'll pass. And if you were also lucky, I suggest that you pass, too.

===

I hope you are doing well. My name is Abbas Shafii, and I am writing to you with heartfelt gratitude and immense joy. Earlier this year, I experienced something I never imagined would

happen at the age of 79 — I won $328.5 million in the Powerball lottery.

In the spirit of gratitude and giving back, I have chosen to donate $7.2 million each to six individuals from around the world and if you get this email then your email was selected after a spin ball. I have spread most of our wealth over a number of charities and organizations. We have voluntarily decided to donate the sum of {$7.2 Millions} to you as one of the selected {6}, to confirm the authenticity of my prize, you can visit the website at the following link: https://www.powerball.com/beaverton-man-claims-328.5-million-powerball-jackpot

I just started international charitable donation campaign, I will be giving a donation of $7.2 Million each to improve the life and career of (6) Lucky individuals from any part of the world.

Firstly, I must express my gratitude towards your interest to accept this donation and assist us with my charitable course, I was never a believer of luck until I won the lottery, the same luck that drew us to this fortune has attracted us to you. Your email address was submitted to us by the Email internet management teams as an email User and a part of our donation list your Email ID is among those listed to receive the donation sum of US$7,200,000.00.

This donation is being managed by SoFi Bank, in full accordance with United States financial and legal standards.

If you are interested in receiving this donation, contact my accountant, Mr. Christopher Lapointe, directly using the contact information below

Mr. Christopher Lapointe
Chief Financial Officer, SoFi Bank
Email: christopherlapointe@financialcib.com
Phone: (415) 377-4973

Mr. Christopher will guide you through the necessary identity verification process and facilitate the legal and secure transfer of funds.

To verify your identity and ensure the donation goes to the right person, please send Mr. Christopher the following:

. Donation Reference Code: D6R8-86-AFF8/2rdwinner
. Full Name
. Address
. Age
. Occupation
. Contact information
. Your ID or Passport

Please follow Mr. Christopher instructions to ensure a smooth and secure process.

This is my way of giving back and spreading joy. I sincerely hope this gift brings positive change to your life, as winning the Powerball has brought to mine.

Sincerely,
Mr. Abbas Shafii
Powerball Jackpot Winner

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:34 AM No comments:

Labels: email fraud

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 49

From the Harvard Crimson: *A Harvard administrator told two professors on Tuesday that a Black Lives Matter sign displayed in their office windows would be taken down by this Saturday, describing it as a violation of University-wide rules on using campus space. Bence P. Ölveczky and Mansi Srivastava, professors of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology, posted large block letters in their windows spelling out "Black Lives Matter" in 2020 as protests broke out nationwide over the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police. Since then, the letters have faced out from the Northwest Science Building, where their labs are located. But on Tuesday, Dean of Science Jeffrey W. Lichtman handed Ölveczky a letter addressed to him and Srivastava, saying that the message would be removed... The letter — which was signed by Anthony Mantia, the building manager for the Northwest Building — claimed the message violated Harvard's campus use rules, which were introduced in August 2024 following intense pro-Palestine campus protests in the spring...*

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/8/21/blm-sign/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, Harvard, politics

Straws in the Wind - Part 83

From the Chicago Maroon: *...The University of Chicago's Division of the Arts & Humanities will reduce or pause Ph.D. admissions across all departments, accepting smaller cohorts in seven and suspending admissions entirely in the remaining eight. The Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice will also pause Ph.D. admissions, and the Harris School of Public Policy will pause admissions to its Harris Ph.D., Political Economy Ph.D., and M.A. in Public Policy with Certificate in Research Methods.*

"These unit-level decisions reflect each program's specific context and long-term goals, with the aim of ensuring the highest-quality training for the next generation of scholars," a UChicago spokesperson wrote to the Maroon. "The University remains fully committed to supporting rigorous and impactful graduate education."

...UChicago's preexisting financial challenges, including a $221 million budget deficit as of last October, have been compounded by cuts to student loan programs and federal funding from the National Institutes of Health, National Endowment for the Humanities, and National Science Foundation...

Within the Division of Arts & Humanities, departments pausing enrollments entirely include Classics, comparative literature, Germanic studies, Middle Eastern studies, Romance languages and literatures, Slavic languages and literatures, South Asian languages and civilizations, and visual arts. Ph.D. enrollment will be limited for the art history, cinema and media studies, East Asian languages and civilizations, English language and literature, linguistics, and music departments...

Full story at https://chicagomaroon.com/48307/news/uchicago-to-cut-some-ph-d-masters-admissions-for-2026-27/.

From Inside Higher Ed: *The National Institutes of Health's director ordered employees to "conduct an individualized review of all current and planned research activities," including active grants and funding opportunity announcements, according to images of a document provided to Inside Higher Ed. The review comes amid concerns that the NIH won't distribute all of its allocated grant money by the time the federal fiscal year ends Sept. 30, meaning those dollars will return to the U.S. Treasury. ..The order is part of a larger memo in which [NIH director Jay] Bhattacharya outlined "select agency priorities" and said projects that don't align with these priorities may be "restricted, paused, not renewed, or terminated."*

...Joanne Padrón Carney, chief government relations officer for the American Association for the Advancement of Science, said in a statement to Inside Higher Ed that the president's budget request for fiscal year 2026 already outlined a set priorities for the rest of the current year. "Switching gears at this stage reinforces confusion, diminishes trust, and increases concerns within the scientific community," Carney added. "It joins the long list of tactics risking impoundment of congressionally appropriated funds rather than funding biomedical research that is essential for the people's well-being."

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2025/08/19/nih-director-orders-review-all-current-planned-research.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, health care, politics, U of Chicago

Sepulveda Transit Corridor - Notice

Notice from LA Metro:

Location: San Fernando Valley, Westside Cities

Phase: Environmental Review

Type: Less Traffic

The Sepulveda Transit Corridor is a proposed high-capacity rail line that will provide a crucial north-south transit connection between the San Fernando Valley, the Westside and eventually Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). Currently under environmental review, Metro is evaluating multiple alternatives — including heavy rail and monorail technologies — to address one of the most heavily traveled and congested corridors in Los Angeles County.

If built, the line could serve more than 120,000 daily riders and offer a travel time of just 20 minutes between the Valley and Westside. This project is funded in part by Measure M and aims to support regional growth, environmental sustainability, and equity in transit access. Metro is partnering with engineering firms and local municipalities to identify the most effective and community-supported solution.

Status

The Sepulveda Transit Corridor project is currently in the planning phase, which began with scoping meetings* held in late 2021 and early 2022. An environmental review is underway to evaluate five project alternatives that vary in route and transit mode. Metro entered into Pre-Development Agreements (PDAs) with two private sector teams to design several of these alternatives: LA SkyRail Express (LASRE) developed Alternatives 1 and 3, while Sepulveda Transit Corridor Partners (STCP) designed Alternatives 4 and 5. Alternative 6 is being prepared by Metro's environmental consultant, HTA Partners.

Metro has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)** under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The DEIR analyzes a range of rail transit modes, alignments, and station locations to address the transportation needs of the Sepulveda Corridor.

Below is more information about how to access the document, how to submit a comment, upcoming Draft EIR Information Sessions, and upcoming Draft EIR Public Hearings.

The printed Executive Summary is available at local libraries within the project area and the full DEIR is available at the Metro Library.

The 90-day comment period will end on August 30, 2025. Comments will be accepted throughout the comment period online, via email, project hotline and U.S. Mail as follows:

Comment form: https://metro.commentinput.com/?id=HNYpSPZkD

Email: sepulvedatransit@metro.net

Project information line: 213.922.7375

U.S. Mail: Peter Carter, Metro, One Gateway Plaza, MS 99-22-6, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tell us what you think

Public hearings to accept verbal and written public comments will be held at the following dates and locations:

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Wednesday, August 6, 2025, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Webinar Link: https://bit.ly/STC-Aug6

Webinar ID: 827 5651 8473

Call In Number: 213.338.8477

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Thursday, August 7, 2025, 5:30–7:30pm; Presentation will begin at 6 pm

Westwood United Methodist Church, 10497 Wilshire Bl, Los Angeles, CA 90024

--

Saturday, August 9, 2025, 10:00am-12:00pm; Presentation will begin at 10:30 am

Westfield Topanga Community Center, 21710 Vanowen St, Canoga Park, CA 91303

--

Tuesday, August 12, 2025, 5:30–7:30pm; Presentation will begin at 6 pm

Veterans Memorial Building Rotunda Room, 4117 Overland Av, Culver City, CA 90230

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Monday, August 18, 2025, 5:30-7:30pm; Presentation will begin at 6 pm

Sherman Oaks East Valley Adult Center, 5056 Van Nuys Bl, Building B, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

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The presentation will be the same at all information sessions and meetings.

Live Spanish interpretation will be available at all meetings. All Metro meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities. Other ADA accommodations and interpretation are available by calling 213.922.7375 at least 72 hours in advance.

Following public input, Metro will identify a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to recommend to the Metro Board of Directors.

In parallel, Metro is conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study to engage federal agencies early in the process and identify issues for further analysis as part of the project's future Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

"The Hub"*** is a new project microsite featuring an overview of the project, detailed information about each alternative, transit technologies, station locations, and proposed maintenance and storage facilities. The Hub also includes links to video modules, past meeting recordings, and presentations.

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*https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/lw1nixokb1jbqwmch3koa/Sepulveda-Transit-Corridor-Scoping-Summary-Report.pdf?rlkey=nf3ff0r7kyzrkp9zpy88053bh&e=2&dl=0

**https://us.planengage.com/sepulvedacorridor/page/home

***https://stc-lametro.hub.arcgis.com/

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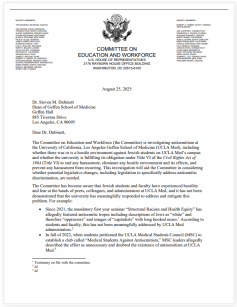
Source: https://www.metro.net/projects/sepulvedacorridor/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: transportation, UCLA

Tuesday, August 26, 2025

Letters



COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2176 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6100

August 25, 2025

Dr. Steven M. Dubinett
Dean of Geffen School of Medicine
at UCLA
885 Tiverton Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90095

Dear Dr. Dubinett,

The Committee on Education and Workforce (the Committee) is investigating antisemitism at the University of California, Los Angeles Geffen School of Medicine (UCLA Med), including whether there was or is a hostile environment against Jewish students on UCLA Med's campus and whether the university is fulfilling its obligations under Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964* (Title VI) to end any harassment, eliminate any hostile environment and its effects, and prevent its recurrence. Additionally, the Committee is reviewing Title VI's statutory framework, including whether potential legislative changes, including legislation to specifically address antisemitic discrimination, are needed.

The Committee has become aware that Jewish students and faculty have experienced hostility and fear at the hands of peers, colleagues, and administrators at UCLA Med, and it has not been adequately addressed. The University has meaningfully responded to address and mitigate this problem. For example:

- Since 2021, the mandatory first year seminar "Structural Racism and Health Equity" has allegedly featured antisemitic tropes including descriptions of Jews as "white" and Israelis "oppressors" and images of "capitalists" with long hooked noses.[1] According to reports received by the Committee, this has not been meaningfully addressed by UCLA Med administrators.[2]
- In fall of 2022, when students petitioned the UCLA Medical Students Council (MSC) to establish a club called "Medical Students Against Antisemitism," MSC leaders allegedly described the effort as unnecessary and doubted the existence of antisemitism at UCLA Med.[3]

[1] Testimony on file with the committee.
[2] Id.
[3] Id.

From the LA Times: *The UCLA and UC San Francisco medical schools have been given two weeks to submit years of internal documents to a Republican-led congressional committee about alleged antisemitism and how the schools responded, widening the federal government's far-reaching investigations into the University of California. The demands from House Education and Workforce Committee Chair Rep. Tim Walberg (R-Mich.) cited reports of Jewish people "experiencing hostility and fear" at each campus and that universities had not proved that they "meaningfully responded."*

Walberg's letters said the committee would be investigating whether the schools violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance...

Full story at https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-08-25/ucla-ucsf-medical-school-house-education-committee.

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UCLA letter: https://ia600402.us.archive.org/9/items/2-final-hjaa-report.-the-soil-beneath-the-encampments/UCLA_med_letter%20from%20House_8.21.25.pdf or https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/ucla_med_letter_8.21.25.pdf.

UCSF letter: https://ia600402.us.archive.org/9/items/2-final-hjaa-report.-the-soil-beneath-the-encampments/UCSF_letter%20from%20House_8.21.25.pdf or https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/ucsf_letter_8.21.25.pdf.

Note: The actual letters are dated Aug. 25, but the file names indicate they were prepared on Aug. 21.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:57 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, UC-San Francisco, UCLA

Mysterious Sentence

You probably saw the LA Times article about UCLA and its current negotiations with the Dept. of Justice.*

The article talks about "guardrails" surrounding the negotiations and confirms such things as the decision making is going on at the UC level with the UC general counsel and an outside law firm involved.

But there is one rather mysterious sentence:

"***The talks with the Justice Department are just beginning and so far involve 10 of the 24 UC regents, including chair Janet Reilly and UC President James B. Milliken.***"

And so do we assume that the other 14 Regents are - what? - not involved?

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*https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-08-25/uc-ucla-trump-newsom-regents-research-grant-cuts-suspensions.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Milliken, UC, UC Regents, UCLA

Klein v. Bernardo and Regents - Part 3

If you are wondering whatever happened to the Klein v. Bernardo case, we remind you that the Daily Bruin has kept a record of the various events of the trial at:

https://dailybruin.com/category/breaking/klein-trial-coverage

But the short answer is that it will resume in early September. And note that the trial involves events that occurred in 2020, five years ago. That's a reminder that litigation to fix things, whatever they are, can take a long time.

Our previous posts on this trial - in the event that you have totally forgotten what the case is about - are at:

https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/07/klein-v-bernardo-and-regents-part-2.html;
and https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/07/klein-v-bernardo-and-regents.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 82

From the Forward: *...Admissions officers at six universities — including Columbia — are using a new tool to assess how prospective students might navigate this increasingly charged campus political climate. Schoolhouse Dialogues, hosted on the nonprofit tutoring platform Schoolhouse founded by Sal Khan, pairs high schoolers with opposing viewpoints to discuss controversial issues one-on-one and give feedback on each other's civility. A handful of schools will use that feedback, dubbed "civility transcripts," in admissions.*

The participating schools — several of which are engaged in high-profile disputes with the Trump administration over alleged campus antisemitism — say they are seeking applicants willing to engage in respectful civil discourse across political divides...

Six schools — Columbia University, Colby College, Johns Hopkins University, University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and Washington University in St. Louis — are allowing students to optionally submit Schoolhouse Dialogues portfolios as part of their application for the upcoming admissions cycle. Neither recordings nor transcripts of conversations are sent to admissions officers. Instead, students who choose to submit will send colleges their "dialogues portfolio," which shows how many sessions the student has attended, what topics they discussed, their self-reflections, and the feedback they received from other students...

Not every institution has embraced the use of Dialogues in admissions. Both the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Vanderbilt ultimately decided not to continue after initial trials — with Vanderbilt stating it withdrew from the program "after careful consideration and hearing some concerns." ...

Full story at https://forward.com/news/762715/columbia-university-antisemitism-schoolhouse-dialogues/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, Colby College, Columbia, Johns Hopkins, MIT, Northwestern U, U of Chicago, Vanderbilt U

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 48

From the NY Times: *...With billions of dollars in research funds in jeopardy, the [Harvard's] leaders are now negotiating with the White House. But an eventual deal may not fully capture the changes, small and large, already enacted at Harvard before any papers are signed. The university has recoiled at some of the sweeping changes the Trump administration demanded. Harvard's president, Dr. Alan M. Garber, has singled out several as intrusive and unconstitutional, including demands that might influence whom the university hires and admits. But it has also taken a host of steps that align with the White House's desires, checking off items on the administration's detailed menu, which have ranged from eliminating diversity offices to ousting program leaders. In some cases, students and faculty members worry, the new, Trump-inspired policies may interfere with the freedom of expression that is central to the university's mission...*

The Trump administration's demands included eliminating diversity, equity and inclusion programs. In April, Harvard renamed its Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging, which is now called the Office for Community and Campus Life. More recently, Harvard also took down websites for its Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations, as well as websites for companion offices for gay and female students, and said they were merging them into a new, single center. The government has also sought leadership shake-ups in certain departments, including the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, after Jewish alumni and others accused the programs of sponsoring antisemitic programming. Harvard removed two of the center's leaders, including Cemal Kafadar, a leading Turkish scholar, in March...

The university has announced some of the changes, arguing that they were needed to make the campus more welcoming and more open to different viewpoints... Officials at Harvard declined to comment for this article, but some have argued privately that some changes were already underway before Mr. Trump's inauguration. Dr. Garber has also acknowledged that he agrees with some of the White House's positions, among them that Harvard has shut out voices that liberals disagree with and that it had failed to adequately restrain campus antisemitism...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/23/us/harvard-changes-academic-freedom-trump-deal.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, Harvard, politics

Monday, August 25, 2025

Nothing to See Here - Really!

Usually, when you are told there is nothing to see, there is something. And usually, when the state controller's monthly cash report comes out, we take note of it within a reasonable time.

In the case of the July report - just one month into the 2025-25 fiscal year, there really was nothing exciting to see. Of course, one month does not a year make. But revenues came in more or less as forecast in July. State unused borrowable resources are down from what they were a year ago, in part because we have run down various reserves related to the General Fund. But that is old news.

You can see the July 2025 cash report at:

https://sco.ca.gov/Files-ARD/CASH/July2025StatementofGeneralFundCashReceiptsandDisbursements.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: controller, State Budget

Straws in the Wind - Part 81

From Inside Higher Ed: *The University of Chicago's Arts and Humanities Division is reducing how many new Ph.D. students it admits for the 2026–27 academic year across about half of its departments and completely halting Ph.D. admissions elsewhere. Multiple language programs are among those affected... Arts and Humanities dean Deborah Nelson told faculty, staff and Ph.D. students, "We will accept a smaller overall Ph.D. cohort across seven departments: Art History, Cinema and Media Studies, East Asian Languages and Civilizations, English Language and Literature, Linguistics, Music (composition), and Philosophy." The university didn't tell Inside Higher Ed how many fewer Ph.D. students would be accepted across those departments. "Other departments will pause admissions," Nelson wrote.*

Andrew Ollett, an associate professor of South Asian languages and civilizations, said that means no new Ph.D. students for these departments: classics, comparative literature, Germanic studies, Middle Eastern studies, Romance languages and literatures, Slavic languages and literatures, and South Asian languages and civilizations, plus the ethnomusicology and history and theory of music programs in the music department. While the university didn't provide an interview or respond to multiple written questions, a spokesperson did point out that the UChicago Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice is also pausing Ph.D. admissions, while the Harris School of Public Policy is pausing admissions for the Harris Ph.D., the political economy Ph.D. and the master of arts in public policy with certificate in research methods...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/business/academic-programs/2025/08/14/uchicago-freezing-phd-admissions-multiple-programs.

From Inside Higher Ed: *The University of Texas System Board of Regents voted... to disband the system's long-standing faculty senates in compliance with Senate Bill 37, the sweeping Texas higher education law that gives university boards and presidents control over faculty governing bodies. The UT board also voted... to create faculty advisory groups, which will "perform the work of faculty governance bodies"—such as reviewing degree requirements, suggesting curricular changes, coordinating campus events and revising the faculty handbook —while keeping all decision-making power in the hands of the administration. The University of Houston system Board of Regents did the same..., voting to create faculty councils that will "provide structured, meaningful avenues for faculty to help shape academic priorities, strengthen excellence and contribute to decisions that guide our future," a university spokesperson said in a statement.*

But the groups won't give the faculty independent representation or any real power. In accordance with SB 37, the board bylaws now state, "a faculty council is advisory only and may not be delegated the final decision-making authority on any matter."

...The president will also choose the presiding officer, associate presiding officer and secretary for each group. Appointees may serve for six years before taking a mandatory two-year break from the group, while faculty-elected representatives may only serve for two years before the two-year break...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/shared-governance/2025/08/22/tex-boards-abolish-faculty-senates-create.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, U of Chicago, U of Houston, U of Texas

In denial

From an article in the San Francisco Chronicle: *...A federal judge in San Francisco has ordered the Trump administration to restore the portion of frozen funds that came from the National Science Foundation, believed to be about $81 million. A UC spokesperson has not responded to questions from the Chronicle about whether that money has been restored and whether the university system expects to settle by the deadline, as other universities have done...*

Full story at https://www.sfchronicle.com/california/article/stand-up-for-uc-campaign-ucla-funding-20877957.php.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC

Sunday, August 24, 2025

UCLA Continues its Campaign Highlighting Research

UCLA has been running a campaign highlighting its research contributions in the wake of the federal freeze on research grants and the ongoing conflict with the feds. There is a definite south campus tilt in the campaign for understandable reasons. Kareem Abdul Jabar discusses medical treatments at UCLA from which he benefited:

Or direct to https://ia902901.us.archive.org/7/items/newsom-7-2-2025-arrests-of-immigrants/Kareem_Abdul_Jabbar_Stand_Up_for_UCLA%208-15-2025.mp4.

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Source: https://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/kareem-abdul-jabbar-on-ucla-impact-life-career-health.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, politics, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 80

From Inside Higher Ed: *Arizona State University typically welcomes over 17,900 international students to its four campuses each year, but this fall, due to a variety of complications, the university expects only 14,600 international students will attend this fall—an 18 percent drop. If the projection holds, international students will account for 7.5 percent of ASU's 194,000 students this fall, according to an Aug. 11 news release. In comparison, during the 2023–24 academic year, ASU hosted 18,400 international students, with a total enrollment of 183,000, or more than 10 percent.*

The change is in part due a drop in master's applications from international students, but primarily driven by challenges to visa appointments, according to a university spokesperson...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2025/08/13/asu-projects-18-drop-international-student-enrollment.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Arizona State University, diversity, politics

Maybe less opaqueness would be more realistic

DAILY BRUIN

A CLOSER LOOK | Aug. 19, 2025 5:56 p.m.

Students urge transparency during UC's efforts to restore federal funding

Students urged the UC to protect its researchers and increase transparency amid federal negotiations to restore UCLA's frozen research grants. The Trump administration suspended about 800 of UCLA's research grants from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation and the United States Department of Energy in late July.

By Elizabeth Yang

You may have seen this headline in the Bruin.* Transparency always seems to be a Good Thing. But it doesn't really work in negotiations. It's not uncommon in high-profile labor negotiations, for example, for the parties to agree not to leak what is going on and to issue joint (usually laconic) statements along the way.

On the other hand, the public in such cases knows that negotiations are occurring. In the UC/UCLA/feds case, we can surmise that there are negotiations. But even that is not being officially revealed. So, there won't be transparency. But there could be less opaqueness.

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*https://dailybruin.com/2025/08/19/students-urge-transparency-during-ucs-efforts-to-restore-federal-funding.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC, UCLA

Saturday, August 23, 2025

Is there a hidden message?

Now here's an item from a Birmingham, AL TV station that may contain a hidden message for UCLA:

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced a strengthened partnership on Wednesday, focusing on advancing health care quality in Alabama and nationwide, supported by over $28 million in federal funds secured by Sen. Katie Britt. "You have a champion in me," Britt said.

This announcement follows UAB administration's request for staff to reduce spending after the federal government cut $70 million from the health care system in April. NIH Director Jay Bhattacharya visited UAB, Alabama's largest employer, to share his vision since taking over the organization earlier this year...

Full story at https://www.wvtm13.com/article/uab-nih-partnership-healthcare-katie-britt/65786631.

As we have noted in previous postings, UCLA's problem is not just restoring federal funding for current projects that were frozen. The university depends on grant renewals and new grants. Think, for example, of the new and very expensive facility being created in the old Westside Pavilion for UCLA. For that facility to pay off, there has to be ongoing funding, not just completion of old grants. It would be much harder to force new allocations through litigation than to restore existing commitments. Meanwhile, other universities that have not been targeted by the feds - such as the example above - can get new funds, particularly those in "red" states. Intentional or not, the news item above carries that hidden message.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, U of Alabama, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 79

From the NY Times: *For generations, 529 college savings plans were a no-brainer for most parents wanting to start a college fund. They are tax-advantaged and primarily used to pay for higher education expenses... But now, some parents are pumping the brakes on the accounts and rethinking how they plan to save for their children's future. With growing uncertainty around the value of higher education, and a fear of locking funds into something their child may not use, many of these parents are looking for flexible plans that don't tie their money exclusively to higher education.*

While 65 percent of parents and parents-to-be are saving for their children's future using a savings account, fewer than a quarter are using a 529 plan, according to data provided by the Harris Poll and Intuit Credit Karma. Among those who have used one, 19 percent have closed their 529 plans early and another 22 percent have considered doing so...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/26/business/529-parents-saving-college.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Don't Count on the Court

From Inside Higher Ed: *The United States Supreme Court is allowing the National Institutes of Health to cut nearly $800 million in grants, though it left the door open for the researchers to seek relief elsewhere. In a 5-to-4 decision issued Thursday, the court paused a Massachusetts district court judge's June decision to reinstate grants that were terminated because they didn't align with the NIH's new ideological priorities. Most of the canceled grants mentioned diversity, equity and inclusion goals; gender identity; COVID; and other topics the Trump administration has banned funding for. The district judge, in ruling against the administration, said he'd "never seen racial discrimination by the government like this."*

Justice Amy Coney Barrett wrote that the district court "likely lacked jurisdiction to hear challenges to the grant terminations, which belong in the Court of Federal Claims," with which Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito Jr., Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh agreed. "The

reason is straightforward," Kavanaugh wrote. "The core of plaintiffs' suit alleges that the government unlawfully terminated their grants. That is a breach of contract claim. And under the Tucker Act, such claims must be brought in the Court of Federal Claims, not federal district court." ...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/science-research-policy/2025/08/21/scotus-says-nih-doesnt-have-restore-canceled.

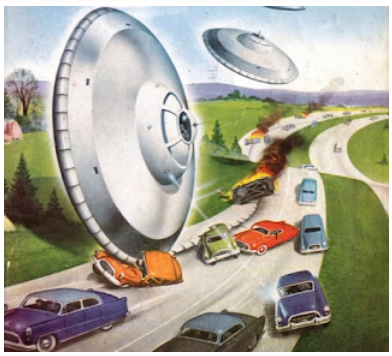
Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, politics

Friday, August 22, 2025

Traffic Problems Near UCLA This Weekend

No, not as bad as the picture and more conventional. See below:



From Patch: *Traffic is expected to be impacted on the 405 Freeway this weekend when construction shuts down several lanes on both sides of the interstate near the Sepulveda Pass. The roadwork will also shut ramps at three major boulevards on the Westside. The freeway will be reduced to at least three lanes in each direction roughly between Westwood and the Getty Center beginning 10 p.m. Friday and continuing through 5 a.m. Monday. Additionally, ramps at Santa Monica, Sunset and Wilshire boulevards will be impacted, according to Caltrans.*

Several detours will be in effect and motorists are advised to avoid that area of the 405 Freeway where possible...

More details at https://patch.com/california/santamonica/s/jk8k6/55hour-closure-at-major-la-freeway-traffic-choke-point-starts-friday.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 11:07 AM No comments:

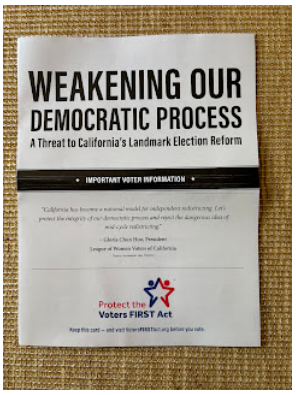
Labels: traffic, UCLA

Bigger Fish to Fry

As blog readers will know, Gov. Newsom expressed outrage about the demand from the feds that UC/UCLA pay $1 billion. But since then, he hasn't said much about that issue. He certainly hasn't proposed that the state allocate funding to UC to tide it over while litigation is pursued.

It is important to note that the governor has bigger fish to fry. He has been non-campaigning for president for more than a year. And now he is pushing a proposition that the legislature, at his bidding, just put on the ballot that would redistrict (gerrymander) California congressional seats in response to Texas and other red states doing the same.

In short, don't look to the governor to fix UC/UCLA's problems with the feds. There will be a major campaign around the redistricting proposition. Yours truly has already received a mailer - ***before*** the legislature had even put the issue on the ballot - opposing the proposition. (See the image.) Former governor Schwarzenegger, who views the current districting commission approach as his signature policy, has already announced opposition.

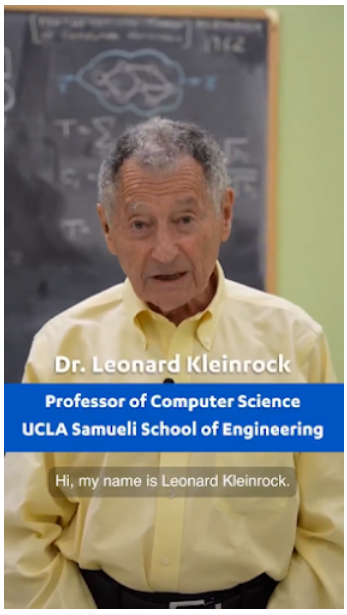


The governor will be absorbed in his non-campaign for president and the redistricting issue for some time. He won't be focused on UC/UCLA.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:59 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, legislature, politics, UC, UCLA

UCLA's Campaign


Dr. Leonard Kleinrock
Professor of Computer Science
UCLA Samueli School of Engineering
Hi, my name is Leonard Kleinrock.

UCLA has been somewhat sidelined in terms of whatever negotiations are going on concerning the fund freeze at higher levels. But it has been running videos on the importance of research funding. Example:

Or direct to https://ia902901.us.archive.org/7/items/newsom-7-2-2025-arrests-of-immigrants/UCLA%20tweet%20on%20govt%20funding%20-%20Kleinrock%208-18-2025.mp4.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 78

From the Houston Chronicle: *The Texas State University System Board of Regents has approved new rules that will temporarily dissolve faculty senates and increase board members' oversight on curriculum and hiring decisions. A vote on Friday made Texas State the first of the*

state's seven university systems to adopt changes stemming from Senate Bill 37. The law limits faculty influence and advances a fight against what some Republicans perceive to be a liberal bias in higher education.

...Faculty members in the Texas State system won't have a formal mechanism for that input until their advisory groups, known as faculty senates, re-start under a new structure in line with the board's rules. The law stipulates that regents can affirm existing senates if they adopt SB 37 before Sept. 1, otherwise they will be abolished on the same date. Texas State did not affirm the existing senates.

...Texas State's board members approved the rules through a consent agenda, without any discussion...

SB 37 clarified that universities have the final say on curricula — though under the guidance of governing boards. The boards' reviews could pinpoint courses they deem unnecessary for the workforce...

SB 37 puts faculty councils or senates under guidelines set by the board. Faculty will soon have less say in who serves on their senates: New groups will be smaller in many cases, capped at 60 members made up of at least two representatives from each college or school. The university president will appoint one member per school, with the ability to serve six consecutive one-year terms, and the remainder will be elected by a vote of that schools' faculty. Those members can serve two-year terms, then they must step down from their positions...

Full story at https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/education/article/texas-state-sb37-20808973.php.

From the NY Times: *The Justice Department on Tuesday found that George Washington University was "deliberately indifferent to antisemitic discrimination" on its campus, the latest allegation from the Trump administration over a college's response to discrimination against Jewish students and faculty.*

In a letter to GWU President Ellen Granberg, Harmeet K. Dhillon, the assistant attorney general for civil rights, said that the Justice Department would deploy "enforcement" measures against the school unless a voluntary resolution is reached. She requested a response by Aug. 22.

"No one is above the law, and universities that promulgate antisemitic discrimination will face legal consequences," Dhillon said in a statement.

The Trump administration has sought to reform higher education through investigations into alleged civil rights violations, often relating to antisemitism or diversity, equity and inclusion programs. Critics have said the administration is using antisemitism probes as a pretext to pursue an unrelated conservative agenda. In recent weeks, prominent institutions reached settlements with the administration, including Columbia University, which agreed to pay more than $200 million as part of changes meant to claw back federal funding cut by the administration.

GWU, which was the center of region-wide encampment demonstrations during campus protests against the war in Gaza last year, confirmed that it is reviewing the letter and plans to respond in a "timely manner." ...

Full story at https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2025/08/12/george-washington-university-justice-department-antisemitism/.

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From the Hechinger Report: *...An exodus appears to be under way of Ph.D.s and faculty generally, who are leaving academia in the face of political, financial and enrollment crises. It's a trend federal data and other sources show began even before Trump returned to the White House. On top of everything else affecting higher education, this is likely to reduce the quality of education for undergraduates, experts say. Nearly 70 percent of people receiving doctorates were already leaving higher education for industry, government and other sectors, not including those without job offers or who opted to continue their studies, according to the most recent available figures from the National Science Foundation — up from fewer than 50 percent decades ago.*

As for faculty, more than a third of provosts reported higher-than-usual turnover last year, in a survey by Hanover Research and the industry publication Inside Higher Ed. That was before the turmoil of this late winter and spring. "People who can get out will get out," said L. Maren Wood, director and CEO of the Center for Graduate Career Success, which works with doctoral and other graduate students at 69 colleges and universities to provide career help. If the spree of general job-switching that followed Covid was dubbed "the Great Resignation," Wood said, what she's seeing now in higher education is "the Great Defection."

Getting a Ph.D. is a traditional pipeline to an academic career. Now some of the brightest candidates — who have spent years doing cutting-edge research in their fields to prepare for faculty jobs — are leaving higher education or signing on with universities abroad, Wood said.

...A Facebook group of dissatisfied academics, called The Professor Is Out, has swelled to nearly 35,000 members. It was started by Karen Kelsky, a former anthropology professor who previously helped people get jobs in academia and now coaches them on how to leave it. "It's difficult to overcome the stereotype of a university professor, which is that they're coddled, they're overprivileged, they're arrogant and just enjoying total job security that nobody else has," said Kelsky, who also wrote "The Professor Is In: The Essential Guide to Turning Your Ph.D. Into a Job," a second edition of which is due out this fall. Today, "they are overworked. They're grossly underpaid. They are being called the enemy. And they're bailing on academia," she said...

Full story at https://hechingerreport.org/a-great-defection-threatens-to-empty-universities-and-colleges-of-top-teaching-talent/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, George Washington U, miscellaneous, politics, Texas State U

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